

**CLAIM AMENDMENTS**

Please amend the claims by canceling claims 28-34 and 36 and amending claims 35, 37, and 39 as indicated below, all without prejudice, as indicated on the following listing of all the claims in the present application after this Amendment:

1.(Original) A method of operating a memory system including a controller and a non-volatile memory, wherein the non-volatile memory is comprised of a plurality of units of erase, the method comprising:

establishing a set of metablock linkings, each comprised of a plurality of units of erase, by which the controller accesses the non-volatile memory; and

storing a record of said metablock linkings in the non-volatile memory.

2.(Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said record is a complete specification of the set of linkings in terms of units of erase.

3.(Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said set of linkings is formed according to a rule and the record consists of those linkings that are exceptions to the rule.

4.(Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

determining that a unit of erase in a first of said metablock linkings is defective;

updating the first metablock linking so that it no longer contains said defective unit of erase; and

storing a record of the updated linking in the non-volatile memory.

5.(Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said updating comprises replacing the defective unit of erase with another one of said units of erase.

6.(Original) The method of claim 5, wherein said another one of said units of erase is selected from a list of unlinked units of erase.

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7.(Original) The method of claim 6, wherein said list of unlinked units of erase is maintained in the non-volatile memory.

8.(Original) The method of claim 7, further comprising:  
subsequent to said replacing the defective unit of erase with another one of said units of erase, updating said list of unlinked units of erase.

9.(Original) The method of claim 5, wherein said another one of said units of erase is selected from a unit of erase formerly belonging to another linking.

10.(Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
maintaining a list of unlinked units of erase;  
determining that one or more units of erase in a first of said metablock linkings is defective; and  
adding the non-defective units of erase in the first metablock to the list of unlinked units of erase.

11.(Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
determining that a unit of erase in a first of said metablock linkings is defective;  
determining whether an alternate unit of erase is available for the defective unit of erase; and  
in response to determining that an alternate unit of erase is not available, removing the first metablock from the set of metablock linkings.

12.(Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said non-volatile memory comprises a plurality of quasi-independent arrays and each of the plurality of units of erase in a given one of said metablock linkings are from a different one of said quasi-independent arrays.

13.(Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said non-volatile memory comprises a plurality of quasi-independent arrays and the plurality of units of erase in a given one of said metablock linkings are comprised of pairs of units of erase from the same quasi-

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independent array, wherein each of the pairs are from a different one of said quasi-independent arrays

14.(Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, wherein said quasi-independent arrays are on separate chips

15.(Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said record of said metablock linkings is stored in a portion of the non-volatile memory other than those assigned for user

16.(Original) The method of claim 1, wherein each of said units of erase is comprised of a plurality of sectors and each of the sectors includes a data area and an overhead area, and wherein the record information for those units of erase containing data is maintained in their overhead area.

17.(Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the record information for those units of erase without data is maintained in a portion of the non-volatile memory other than those assigned for user data.

18-34.(Cancelled)

35.(Currently Amended) A The memory system of claim 28 including a controller and a non-volatile memory, wherein the non-volatile memory is comprised of a plurality of units of erase, wherein the controller accesses the non-volatile memory according to a set of metablock linkings, each comprised of a plurality of units of erase, wherein the controller establishes the set of metablock linkings in a deterministic manner, wherein the set of metablock linkings is established based on a random allocation.

36.(Cancelled)

37.(Currently Amended) A The memory system of claim 36 including a controller and a non-volatile memory, wherein the non-volatile memory is comprised of a  
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plurality of units of erase, wherein the controller accesses the non-volatile memory according to a set of metablock linkings, each comprised of a plurality of units of erase, wherein the controller establishes the set of metablock linkings in a deterministic manner, wherein the set of metablock linkings is updated in response to defects by replacing a defective block in a linking with non-defective block from a list of one or more non-defective blocks, and wherein a record of the list of one or more non-defective blocks maintained in the non-volatile memory.

38.(Original) The memory system of claim 37, wherein the record of the list of one or more non-defective blocks is cached in volatile memory of said controller by said controller.

39.(Currently Amended) A\_The memory system of claim 28—including a controller and a non-volatile memory, wherein the non-volatile memory is comprised of a plurality of units of erase, wherein the controller accesses the non-volatile memory according to a set of metablock linkings, each comprised of a plurality of units of erase, wherein the controller establishes the set of metablock linkings in a deterministic manner, wherein a record of the set of metablock linkings is maintained in the non-volatile memory.

40.(Original) The memory system of claim 39, wherein the record of the set of metablock linkings is cached in volatile memory of said controller by said controller.

41.(Original) The memory system of claim 39, wherein an initial set of metablock linkings is established according to an algorithm and wherein the record of the set of metablock linkings lists only those linkings that do not conform to the algorithm.

42.(Original) The memory system of claim 41, wherein the record of the set of metablock linkings lists only those units of erase that do not conform to the algorithm

43.(Cancelled)